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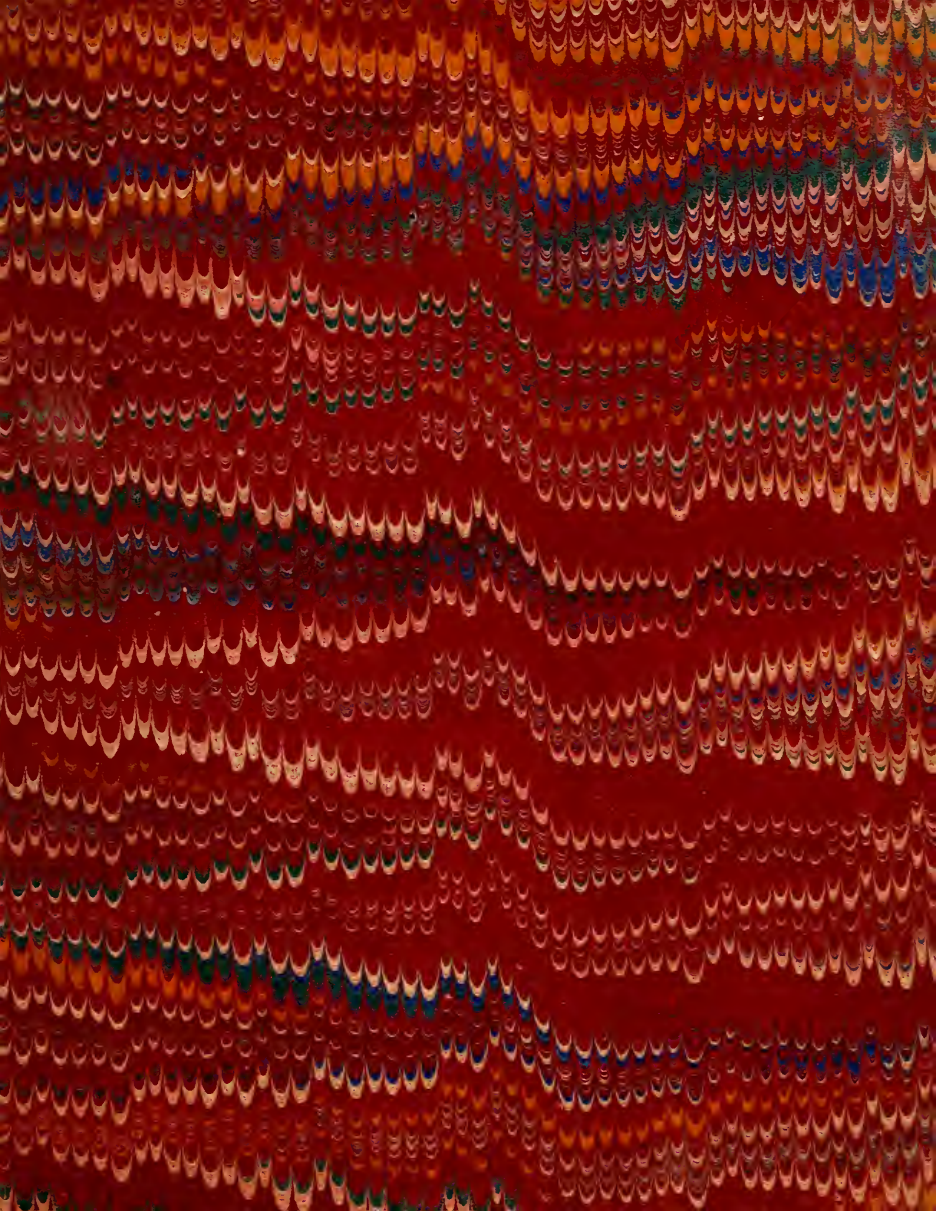
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GASOLOGY

A SATIRE:



By John Donkey
his O mark

Friends and countrymen, lend me your ears.—Shaks.

PHILADELPHIA:

JOHN DONKEY & CO.

P. O. Box 2697.

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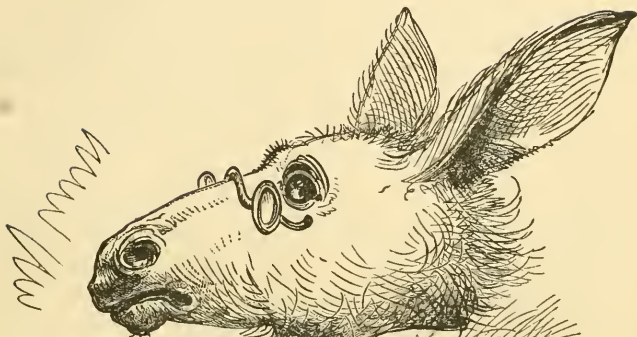
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1878.

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TO HIS
NUMEROUS PROGENY
THROUGHOUT THIS
GREAT YANKEE NATION,
THIS VOLUME IS
RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED BY



THE AUTHOR.



CONTENTS.

	PAGE.
Introduction, ...	9
The Poets, ...	10
Obituary Poetry, ...	13
Editors and Journalists, ...	14
The Golden Age, ...	17
The Iron Age, ...	18
The Telephone, ...	21
The Keely Motor, ...	22
Blue Glass, ...	23
Corrupt Officials, ...	26
The Gas Ring, ...	26
Gassy Congressmen, ...	27
The Aliunde Plan, ...	28
The Commission's Vote of Eight to Seven, ...	29
Patent Returning Boards, ...	29

	PAGE.
Barnum, ...	30
Millerism, ...	31
Hell Abolished, ...	33
Quaker City Gas, ...	34
Gotham Gas, ...	34
New England Gas, ...	35
The Down East Lecturers, ...	35
George Francis Train, ...	38
Credit Mobilier, ...	38
Spirit Rapping, ...	39
Andrew Jackson Davis, ...	42
Preachers and Editors <i>vs.</i> the Infernals, ...	44
Polygamy, ...	45
Brigham Young and John Lee, ...	46
Conversion of the Heathen, ...	48
Associations, ...	49
Monopolists and Money-Makers, ...	50
A Society Opposed to Lying, ...	51
Reform Combinations, ...	53
Grand Finale, ...	57

GASOLOGY.

A SATIRE.

'Tis satire's task to punish folly's crew,
And give each overbearing scamp his due,
To naked lash the self-conceited ass,
Whose frontispiece is overcharged with brass ;
To cherish virtue, and each vice chastise,
Wherever found and in whatever guise.

To some my verse may seem a little rough,
Its language gassy and its rhythm tough ;
The subjects I propose just now to handle,
Can't be illumed with either torch or candle.
More light is what we want, turn on the gas,
And closely scan the humbugs as they pass.

Prolific theme! humbugs by gas inflated,
 With chicanery spiced and permeated ;
 Those airy bubbles I now propose to prick,
 Expose their frauds and send them to Old Nick ;
 Down to Plutonic realms where they belong—
 Base shams and frauds, in countless thousands strong.

The Poets first to you I'll introduce,
 Deft samplers of old rye, grape and corn juice.
 All bards to inspiration make pretence,
 Though few can tell you how it comes or whence.
 In early times, poetic fits were thought
 To be, like other epilepsies, caught
 From blazing suns ; thus Phœbus was invoked,
 When e'er a lyrist sung or satirist joked.
 No sun-inspired poets now are found,
 But moon-struck bardlings everywhere abound.
 If from above the inspiration flows,
 You may its lunar origin suppose ;
 But if it happens, as examples show,
 The inspiration rises from below,
 From dens polluted and unhallowed cells,
 Where alcohol, a cloistered monarch, dwells ;

On him, our best Apollo, now we call,
 By him inspir'd, our gin-slop rhymes we'll scrawl,
 And when we cannot sing we'll learn to drawl.

A German taste in poesy now prevails,
 And modern rhyme a smoky fume exhales,
 Such as the Teutons from their pipes disperse,
 Whose misty essence flavors all their verse ;
 Yet more than German smoke, our minstrel chaps
 Imbibe Dutch liquids—lager beer and schnapps,
 Whose strong aroma overwhelms us quite,
 And makes the reader drunk like those who write.
 No critic can deny that verse like this
 If called effective, is not named amiss,
 Since it must give the reader's head " the queer,"
 To drink anew the poet's gin and beer.
 What else could minstrel do, whate'er his merit,
 Than make the senses feel his ardent spirit ?
 Happy minstrels, thus allowed to rack us,
 With steaming poesy drawn from steamy Bacchus !
 But now by stringent vows, foresworn to water,
 I must find aid in some more favored quarter.

Ah, lucky thought! my theme itself inspires,
 Nor envy I the Bacchanalian choirs.
 Let them on alcoholic steam rely,
 And hope by strong potations to get high;
 I've taken gas, and trust by its inflation,
 To reach a due degree of elevation
 As globes of silk with gas when full inflated,
 Above the chimney-tops are elevated,
 So brains of substance thin, when quite distended
 By gas, are quickly in the air suspended,
 Mounting aloft with great rapidity,
 Beyond the range of all solidity;
 And so on this occasion may we rise,
 And common-sense sobriety surprise;
 Nonsense itself may with the critics pass,
 When 'tis in fashion and the theme is Gas.

Ye steam-inspired bards, your day is past,
 By gas outdone, you soon shall look aghast!
 Nor you alone, oh steaming bards must yield,
 When gas the mighty victor takes the field;
 For steam himself is fated to succumb,
 Cooled are his boilers and his whistles dumb.

Philadelphia claims and I presume you know it,
The great original obituary poet.

We had a little Johnny once,
Whose hair was red and curly ;
The mumps he had and measles too,
Which took him off quite early.
Gone to meet his grandmother.

Affliction sore long time he bore,
He rolled and kicked upon the floor ;
We gave him squills and paregoric,
But now he's gone to meet poor Yorick !

Our little Mary had a lamb,
Whose fleece was white as snow,
Its little tail it wig-a-wagged
Wherever it did go ;
The lamb's defunct and Mary's dead,
And vacant now's her trundle-bed.
Gone, but not forgotten.

A son we had whose name was Peter,
And Peter was an awful eater ;

Cabbage we had one day for dinner,
Which Peter killed, sure's I'm a sinner.

(The cabbage also killed Peter.)

New York and Boston papers please copy.

Molly Scroggs, our eldest daughter,
Like her mother, only shorter ;
She in whom we both confided,
The ager took, and then she died did.

Buried in the Woodlands.

Peter Funk, who whisky drunk,
His beverage changed for water,
Which in his stomach did congeal,
And a widow now's our daughter.
His head was level as a bevel,
And I hope he's gone to the —— place
Where *spirits* are plenty.

The editors may think they have been slighted,
And will for aught I know have me indicted,
Should I fail their calling high to mention ;
They're not forgotten and shall have attention.

Another motor soon will steam surpass,
 And all machinery will be worked by gas.
 Our dailies will be printed by this force,
 And edited by gassy scribes, of course.
 The press political, for brimstone noted,
 With sulphurous, gassy venom will be bloated ;
 A gas most spiteful and untamable,
 Which gives no light and yet's inflammable ;
 Which though it oft explodes, yet does no hurt,
 Except by throwing mud and scattering dirt.

Good heavens ! and is it possible, the press,
 Now so transcendent in its gassiness,
 By any chance can be more gassy still ?
 Can Jove or Fate that prophecy fulfill ?
 Know well, oh skeptic ! that the sons of Faust,
 Have stores of gas which nothing can exhaust ;
 Their vast resources soon they shall display,
 Still more and more developed, day by day.
 This is an Age of Progress, and man's mind,
 Is daily sublimated and refined,
 Grows more expansive, rises, spreads and swells,
 Until on gas and nothing else it dwells.

As yet, some little solid stuff remains,
And dullness rather more than folly reigns ;
A large proportion of the types is lead,
The same of editorials may be said.
As yet ten stupid journals you may find,
For one that is to gassiness inclined.
The dailies affect respectability,
And hit the mark with great facility.
If 'tis respectable to be right dull,
Our journalists are men most worshipful.
Though not without their share of lead and brass,
They show a striking tendency to gas ;
And scores of dolts who scribble for the papers,
Cut, like Æsop's ass, their long-eared capers,
Because some others of the same vocation,
By playing poodle, gain great approbation.
Good heavens ! how long and patiently they try,
Their dull stolidity to gassify !
Of all the humbug family accursed,
A paper humbug surely is the worst ;
The most detestable of all earthly things,
Is humbug raised on typographic wings !

It would indeed a sorry story be
 Within this category all to see ;
 Editors, like all the *genus homo*,
 Oft ugly are, oft handsome as a chromo,
 Like other men, queer hobbies sometimes ride,
 Some four-in-hand, some tandem or astride.
 Some years since, Dana, of the *Gotham Sun*,
 Who the "division, silence" saw so long has run,
 As a freak, learned to ride with lightning speed,
 Boy-like, a two-wheeled French velocipede.
 Journalistic follies for the greater part,
 Are foibles of the head and not the heart.

Are we not taught by hist'ry's teeming page,
 That humbugs have been rife in every age,
 Varying in form to suit each tribe and nation,
 Courting the whims of every generation.
 Thus in the Age of Gold, when cash was flush,
 And money-lenders did not strive to crush ;
 Before the days of banks, when brokers slayed not,
 And financial men the rascal played not,
 But upright always were in all their dealings,
 And even made pretentions to fine feelings,

Which in these times would be ridiculous,
 A thing absurd and apt to tickle us.
 When speculation wasn't gorged with plunder,
 Nor honest dealing taken for a blunder ;
 Then Barnum's artful Yankee trickery,
 Would have been scourged with club of hickory.
 In that blest time the humbugs that existed,
 Were not the grasping, heartless and hard-fisted ;
 Then thoughts could rise above store and court-dockets,
 Nor was the soul wrapped up in breeches pockets ;
 "Souls above buttons" were then no rarity,
 Though now they shock us by their singularity.
 Yet in that Golden Age, no doubt, they cherished
 Their favorite humbugs, long since perished ;
 All but this one indeed, that flourished then,
 And which must flourish still, while men are men ;
 'Tis Priestcraft, which an endless dodge I call,
 The enduring humbug, theological ;
 Changeful in form, in fashion and in name,
 But still in essence and in fact the same.

Again, the Iron Age its humbugs had,
 And hard ones, too, they were, confounded bad ;

Warlike and rude, the people of that time,
 Balked at no deed of violence and crime ;
 But sneaking roguery with them was quite shameful,
 And tricks so common now, had then been blameful.
 The humbugs of that age were clearly seen,
 Deceivers few were found, for all were green. [them
 Though savage were their deeds, the minds which planned
 Too artless were to fully understand them.
 The humbugs then were of a rugged quality,
 And void they were of intellectuality.
 The case is different now, humbugs refined,
 Sublime in all the arts and airs of mind ;
 Not like the preceding, gross, material,
 But light, fantastic, and ethereal ;
 Gassy, in short, to suit a gassy age,
 And cultured minds and fancies to engage.
 What but an age wondrously enlightened,
 What but wits by science polished, brightened,
 What but those by lofty flights inflated,
 The humbugs of our day could have created ?
 Though in construction, they're light and airy,
 And touch us gently like the wand of fairy,

Like other gaseous forms, their evil forces
Are mightier far than fifty thousand horses.

Steam engines are by horse-power rated,
But gas humbugs cannot thus be stated ;
Their power as seen in this great Yankee nation,
Passes all estimate or computation ;
And yet in substance and consistency,
They are as much like moonshine as they can be.
But here the wonder lies ; the wildest scheme
The maniac could conceive, or poet dream ;
Schemes which no sober judgment would believe
Could e'en the donkiest customer deceive ;
Inventions new, so obviously absurd,
That to expose them none would waste a word ;
In short, the shallowest sort of shavery,
The most transparent, shameless, barefaced knav'ry,
Gulls the sovereign people most extensively,
And he who would expose it acts offensively.

See, for instance, speculative bubbles,
Where each adventurer his venture doubles,

And none are losers, as if all could win
 In such teetotum games! Old Nick must grin
 To see the money-worshippers so baited,
 And hooked on barbs by phantasy created.
 Thus, Avarice himself, his grovelling soul,
 Submits to ideality's control,
 Revels in dreams aurif'rous, and alas!
 Awakes to find his golden dreams all gas.
 The world's thus bubbled to its heart's content,
 Fooled to the very summit of its bent,
 With gassy promises and false pretenses,
 'Till sated quite and stupified each sense is.

The Téléphone just now is all the rage,
 The last invention of this wondrous age.
 Old Neptune in his coral cave below,
 Need never more his clam or conch-shell blow,
 Electric music now is furnished free,
 To all the countless mermaids of the sea ;
 The telephone, invention wondrous, new,
 By cable quickly sends the music through.
 Now all the nations of this blessed earth,
 With sacred songs and lively songs of mirth,

In every tongue and clime, on land and sea,
 Can have an universal jubilee.
 Old "Yankee Doodle," played by Uncle Sam,
 Is plainly heard across in far Siam;
 "God Save the Queen," in merry England sung,
 Is straightway cabled o'er to Wah Chee Fung.
All music telephoned can never be,
 Neither o'er the land nor across the sea—
 List to that awful din, infernal clatter,
 'Tis Herr Wagner's March, Lanier's Cantata!

The Keely Motor next our notice claims,
 The "Great What Is It?" without result or aims.
 Gas and steam are now but foolish potter,
 When compared with Keely's ounce of water.
 With this he'd raise old Cheops in a trice,
 And knock to smithereens the Arctic ice;
 But still this wonderful, unique machine,
 Can never by the vulgar crowd be seen.
 Oh! shall we see it at the next Centennial,
 Or not before the happy days millennial?

Another miracle now has come to pass—
 That marv'llous panacea, called Blue Glass.

Ghost of Jenner and ye shades of Galen,
 'Mongst the Saw-bones now there's awful wailin';
 Spoonfuls of jalap, nux, blue mass and squills,
 Those sovereign balms for mankind's many ills;
 Calomel, rhubarb and paregoric,
 With other drugs more or less historic,
 Which in their day and in their generation,
 Were greatly famed for lively salivation;
 But like many things, they've had their day,
 Their victims purged and passed away.
 Cataplasms too, and brown soap elysters,
 Leeches, mustard-plasters and fly-blisters,
 Chalk-powders, *aqua pura*, brown-bread pills,
 And last, the doctors come with lengthy bills.
 All these are cast adrift—turned out to grass—
 The mighty doctor now, is *sky-blue glass*!

The deaf and blind, the lame, the sick and sore,
 And those withal who never limped before;
 The rich and poor, the fat, the tall and lean,
 Alike are bathing now in mazarine.
 The cerebro-spinal-meningitis,
 The measles, pip, small-pox and diabetes,

All quickly yield to magic glass of blue,
The old can now their lease of life renew.
A Liliputian hidden under glass,
Soon for a "*biger* man than Grant" will pass.
These magic rays of light cerulean,
Show powers that now are quite herculean—
Grow grapes as quick and large as Jonah's gourds,
And tiny scissors quickly turn to swords ;
The frisky, suckling pig, that little joker,
Speedily becomes a lusty porker.
Chickens that were hatched by incubation,
Once greatly startled this, our Yankee nation,
But the hatching now that's done with glass of blue,
The palm at once bears off as wonders new.
Mules rigged with spectacles of bluest glass,
Pine shavings quickly eat instead of grass ;
Costly toupees are now no longer known,
For in six hours or less, new hair is grown ;
And pates that once were bald as Uncle Ned's,
And numberless other glistening heads,
Shake their ambrosial locks of flowing hair,
With youthful air and mien quite debonair.

Tomatoes expand like frogs in fable,
 And twelve hours from seed are on the table ;
 Potatoes sprout as soon as they are planted,
 If but under glass small space they're granted ;
 When beneath blue glass the dead are laid out,
 At once they rise, for death is played out !

Celebrity is gassy merchandise,
 And gassy candidates secure the prize,
 For gas has here a tendency to rise.
 Not only authors does this gas make glorious,
 But renders politicians too, victorious.
 The gassiest faction is e'er ascendant,
 Since gas is self-hoisting—independent,
 And on brains or honesty relies not,
 The dull path of patriotism tries not.
 That typical hydrogen political,
 With gleam deceptive, hypocritical,
 Like *ignis-fatuus* whirls and dances,
 And hits the people's erring fancies ;
 Shines but ensnares, and dazzles to deceive them,
 And at last in bogs and ditches leaves them.

Fraud and gross speculation now are rife,
 For public plunder everywhere's the strife,
 And corrupt officials, both the high and low,
 First and always for our money go.
 They can invest in stocks, fast horses too,
 And when their stolen moneys they've run through,
 At the public crib they ask admission,
 And clamor loudly for a recognition.
 Year by year are taxes getting higher,
 And deeper still we're sinking in the mire.
 Pray, what Hercules, with patriot's zeal,
 Will put his mighty shoulder to the wheel,
 And with honest purpose and a helping hand,
 Cause us once more on solid ground to stand ?

Among the rings, in this, our Quaker City,
 A Gas-Ring lives and rules, and more's the pity ;
 A body soulless, grasping and hard-fisted,
 Whose rules are modelled, drawn and twisted,
 Just to suit their own peculiar notions ;
 Meantime, their most worshipful devotions,
 Are offered up at morning, noon and night,
 For blessings on their flick'ring, dim gas-light.

If those prayers were heard and answered soon,
'Twould to consumers be a heavenly boon,
For the gas now metered through our burners,
Is greeted all too oft with wicked murmurs.

Oh, that we had gasometers to test,
What presidential candidate is best,
I mean the gassiest; for by such assay,
We might elect him in the shortest way,
Saving much coin and conscience too,
Which always is required to "put 'em through;"
Also the cost of marketable votes,
And paying editors for turning coats,
And lying in an opposite direction,
To that in which they lied at last election.
If 'tis a rule established, as I think,
That statesmen having honest worth must sink,
While those got up upon a plan balloonish,
In morals doubtful and in mind quite moonish,
Are sure to reach some high official station,
The best expedient for this Yankee nation,
Would be to have the candidates collected,
And then by some pneumatic test inspected,

To make comparisons of density,
And see whose gas has most intensity,
That so we might discover at a glance,
Whom to the highest honors to advance.
By some such process Congressmen are made,
For, evermore, the noisiest, gassy blade,
Is from each district sent, our ears to stun,
With Buncombe speeches fresh from Washington.
Days and weeks they spend in idle chatter,
And firebrands o'er the continent they scatter ;
To prove, in short, the strongest demonstration,
That not a gassier, assier congregation
Than Congress, can be found in all the nation.
If much-misrepresented Uncle Sam,
His scaly representatives would cram
Into mad-houses, or with his boot-toe
Kick the brawling idiots down to Pluto !
For such well-timed, deserved severity,
He would receive the plandits of posterity.

Presidents of late made by commission,
Are by many treated with derision.

That patent process, *aliunde* plan,
 Invented by some wily Congressman,
 Quite mystifies the puzzling rule of three,
 As all who read the scheme can plainly see.
 It is the rule on earth—perhaps in heaven,
 To those who have in store, more shall be given;
 Thus far more potent than the Scripture leaven,
 Was the Commission's vote of eight to seven!
 Then the Returning Boards of late invented,
 By foulest scallawags, yet all "sweet scented,"
 Just like the thimble-rigger's little joker,
 Beat faro, monte, euchre, bluff and poker;
 By rules adopted, three and two make ten,
 A most convenient way to elect their men.
 Shades of Old Hickory! can such things be,
 In a land enlightened, great, progressive, free?

From coals as black as Proserpine's black spouse is,
 They make the gas that lights our streets and houses.
 Thus light from darkness is produced in souls,
 Black as smutty Pennsylvania coals;
 Thus characters swart as mineral fuel,
 Are brilliant made as Brazilian jewel.

Barnum, with gassiness most delectable,
 Contrived to make some humbugs quite respectable ;
 Yea, he himself is called a luminary,
 For Yankee youth—a fine example, very !
 Folks guard their sons from religious error,
 But of scoundrels base, stand not in terror ;
 They'd rather see them in State's prison perch,
 Than to have them join a rival church ;
 This shows a gassiness fantastical,
 Even in matters ecclesiastical.

Some ancient saints, as chronicles declare,
 Whene'er they exercised themselves in prayer,
 Rose from the earth and fluttered in the air !
 Their holy zeal and aspirations high,
 Might seem angelic pinions to supply.
 If modern saints should similarly rise,
 'Twould scarcely be a subject of surprise,
 Provided we should hear the explanation,
 That gas, not grace, produced the elevation.

When Parson Miller, in robes of fustian,
 Preached the doctrine of the earth's combustion,

And fixed the very year, and day, and hour,
 When fire and brimstone on our earth would shower,
 He consoled his trembling congregation,
 By stating that ere the conflagration,
 All the believers not dressed too thickly,
 Would find themselves rising upward quickly,
 Till at a height convenient for safe gazing,
 They might look down and see the earth a blazing,
 Also enjoy a sight once gratifying
 To fanatic hearts—see sinners frying ;
 Cooked alive, like lobsters in a kettle,
 Heaven's last account of grace to settle.

Thus, by their great Evangelis^t, forewarned,
 These Millerites the coming danger scorned,
 But, as admonished, threw away their suits
 Of heavy broadcloth, and thick calf-skin boots,
 Their extra flounces and superfluous silk,
 And in their cambric robes as white as milk,
 Stood shivering in the cold with fond desire,
 To see the first enkindling of the fire ;
 Desiring, if Heaven pleased, to warm their toes,
 And other aching members ere they rose.

But, for some reason I could never learn,
 The fire was sulky and refused to burn ;
 More surprising still, this congregation,
 Equipped so well for their elevation,
 In gossimer-like mulls and jaconets,
 Which formed their showy frocks and pantalets,
 Rose not an inch at the appointed hour,
 And Miller's robes had no ascending power,
 But both the reverend pastor and his flock,
 Stuck to the earth like coral to the rock !
 Event as strange as ever came to pass,
 When 'tis considered how well charged with gas
 These people were, e'en gas fanatical,
 And of all kinds, the lightest that I call.
 Had they like soapy bubbles mounted high,
 All force miraculous we might deny ;
 But well might it our faculties astound,
 To see each gas-bag sticking to the ground ;
That were a miracle past all cavil,
 A mystery I cannot well unravel !

But the Miller crew, though quizzed excessive,
 Were stirring fellows, and still progressive ;

Fast men they were, resolved to go ahead,
 And lead where others would their footsteps tread ;
 No long delays they liked, as some folks do,
 But having jobs on hand, they " put 'em through ;"
 And so that grand affair, the consummation
 Of things terrestrial, by a conflagration,
 They thought should speedily be concluded,
 And wouldn't defer it as not a few did.
 For as the saints were to be elevated,
 And all the stubborn sinners extirpated,
 It was a climax grand and much desired,
 Waiting for which they naturally tired ;
 And so an effort Doctor Cumming makes,
 To mend poor Miller's egregious mistakes.
 On endless misery our thoughts no longer dwell,
 Since Canon Farrar has abolished hell ;
 The devil's occupation having passed away,
 There 'll be no fire and brimstone at the final day !

Thus, gas sometimes exerts a useful force,
 Impelling mortals to an onward course,
 And men of gas now often take the lead,
 In greatest undertakings, and succeed ;

For when success depends on active measures,
 Not judgment sound, the gas men then are treasures ;
 Though seldom useful in plans devising,
 To execute, they have gifts surprising ;
 Hence no impious railer should complain,
 That gas or gassy folks were made in vain.
 Our great reformers oft are men of gas,
 Who give momentum to the hum-drum mass ;
 For gas delights in whatsoever strange is,
 And an endless hankering has for changes.
 It hates quiescence, keeps e'er in motion,
 Ever has a hobby—some queer notion ;
 Sometimes it mounts above the common level,
 But often rides its hobby to the devil.

In gassy developments, the quality
 Depends on custom and locality ;
 Philadelphia gas is not the same thing
 As Gotham gas, and compared, a tame thing ;
 For Gotham's is oxygen, quite acrid,
 The Quaker City sort is rather placid,
 Inclined to terminate in cold water,
 Thus 'tis hydrogen and nothing shorter.

Boston nitrogen being ascendant,
 Becomes a stimulating attendant ;
 Though in New England all stimulation,
 Is deemed a horrid abomination ;
 On gassy stimulus the folks get drunk,
 And give rare exhibitions of their spunk.
 So ardently they manage each reform,
 That every moral movement is a storm ;
 Intemperate, they'll talk on sobriety,
 And Providence slur to show their piety.
 At Union Meetings they'll stir dissensions,
 And will wrangle oft in Peace Conventions.
 Their traveling cynics are so spiteful,
 Their denunciations often frightful ;
 The abuses they decry no doubt are curses,
 But their abuse of good sense much worse is.
 E'en woman's wrongs, expressed by committee
 Of scolding ladies, we forget to pity.

Say, O my muse ! of the lecturing classes,
 Why the Down East sort most famed for gas is ?
 Come and explain the enigma curious,
 Why most excitable and most furious ;

Declare, O goddess ! why in such a clime,
 Fanatic folly should become sublime ?
 There Sol to use his burning power disdains,
 And boils no blood and oozifies no brains.
 The people seldom use the "ardent " there
 Their diet, by necessity, is spare ;
 Their very creeds, if rightly I am told,
 Are quite enough to make their blood run cold ;
 Yet, as fiery as so many dragons,
 Still, themselves they comfort not with flagons.

So much gas is formed in that location,
 'Tis a reservoir for all creation ;
 There every ism starts, and thence extends
 To this vast Continent's remotest ends.
 To every quarter of our land they spread,
 And fill the patriot's soul with anxious dread,
 Lest this Republic like a dream should pass,
 Wrecked and demolished by this deadly gas ;
 The mighty arch constructed to defy
 Each storm of fate that echoes through the sky,
 On which the despots of the olden world,
 In vain have all their machinations hurled ;

This noble fabric, which so firmly stands,
 A proud exemplar to all distant lands,
 Is menaced with the most appalling dangers,
 Not by kings allied or hostile strangers,
 But by scores of dotards, discontented,
 And rantipole grannies, half demented !
 For have we not heard not once, nor seldom,
 Some frothing, ranting chap, straight from bedlam,
 On the lecture-stand—entrance fee a quarter—
 Spout *aqua fortis* first, then milk and water ?
 Vapid and weak they are, till for variety,
 They touch on free-love, treason or impiety ;
 Then by wicked spirits animated,
 Their style more piquant is and elevated ;
 Malice calls forth their best ability,
 Their wit shines most dipped in scurrility,
 When they pronounce some slander or some libel,
 Against our great Republic or the Bible,
 Or bitterly assail the Constitution,
 Brand the patriots of the Revolution,
 To Washington opprobrious terms apply,
 And basely stab his glorious memory.

Then, for a time, the gas that so inflates them,
 Seems to strengthen while it animates them,
 Acts like carbonic acid with such merit,
 It gives weak things a piquancy and spirit,
 Causing them for a while to fume and fret,
 Like soda-water spurting from a jet,
 But soon, the gassy ebullition o'er,
 They're just as wishy-washy as before.

Another name before you I will arraign—
 Bombastes Furioso Francis Train,
 That pyro-gaso, true-blue sky-rocket,
 With cranky brain and plethoric pocket,
 Projector of the *Credit Mobilier*,
 Which long since the ghost gave up and passed away,
 And chief among the saints who with it went,
 Was late the nation's bland Vice-President.
 Bad year for Christian statesmen, 'seventy-two;
 In Congress, matters looked quite black and blue,
 Which when sifted to the bottom and searched through,
 Proved that cash dispersed where most good 'twould do,
 Was to the pockets of some members traced,
 In a manner most shameful and barefaced!

Train, of late, has partially subsided,
 And far more by common sense seems guided ;
 His aspirations, once strange and erratic,
 Have since become more sane and democratic ;
 No longer he aspires to mount a throne,
 But like Jeff. D., asks to be let alone.

I grieve to say, since the above was written,
 George Francis T., has again been smitten
 With his old disease, and as a lion
 Rampant, with tongue of brass and nerves of iron,
 The rostrum as before, he has mounted,
 With his Greenback Legions drilled and counted ;
 Red-hot shot he fires in every quarter,
 From carbine, cannon, rifle, gun and mortar.
 Whether crack-brained, sane, or e'en demented,
 If but a way by him can be invented,
 That shall tend, indeed, to make things better,
 We'll subside at once and be his debtor.

Should I pass that marvel, Spirit Rapping,
 Friends no doubt would think that I was napping.

There's a sympathy and a close alliance,
 Between my theme and the rapping science;
 Each with pneumatology's connected,
 And relationship is much suspected.
 The Germans use one word for gas and ghost,
 And *pneuma* in Greek, means the same almost.
 Homer declares, that heroes, when they pass
 From earth are changed to images of gas;
 "Nought else are all who shined on earth before,
 Ajax and great Achilles now no more,"
 And many Colonels of our times will be,
 Mere bags of gas through all eternity!
 Thus Cuban and our Yankee fillibusters,
 With all the braves the Spanish army musters,
 Whose bravado vauntings sound much louder,
 And do more service than their balls and powder.
 When they their earthly tenements forsake
 And their last march to realms Plutonic take,
 They'll be as doth the Grecian bard relate,
 Effigies of gas in the spirit state.
 The change, methinks, will cost them little trouble,
 For each at present's but a gassy bubble,

And ne'er since creation's earliest date,
Did warriors gassify at such a rate.

Homer's theory's comprehensible,
A creed which now seems true and sensible ;
Hence, good friends, 'tis not surprising, very,
That souls which cross the gloomy stygian ferry,
Just to drill themselves with table-rocking,
And prove their knuckles real by knocking,
Should be gassy found, who were before so,
'Tis likely we shall see them still more so ;
And ever find that poets long departed,
Much more gassy are then when they started ;
Witness their countless metrical transgressions,
Now through mediums, coming by impressions.

If Byron, Pope and other bards sublime,
Write gassy nonsense from the spirit clime,
Great Jove, how living poets will torment us,
When their post-mortem verses shall be sent us !
If Moore and Burns, write twaddle by the quire,
How Martin Tupper will our patience tire !

I dread the time when poets of our day,
 From earthly labors shall be called away ;
 Not that their works done here we might not spare,
 But heaven protect us from their verse made there !
 We find their mortal minstrelsy a curse,
 But fear their spirit-rhyming may be worse ;
 As that would torture be beyond endurance,
 I hope they all believe in Life Insurance,
 And that they will use their best endeavor,
 To be earthly insurances forever.
 Books which spirit authors have dictated,
 Are the most of all with gas inflated ;
 Witness the works of that *rara avis*
 And sham prophet, Andrew Jackson Davis,
 Who tells us tales partly mysterious,
 In tone and manner, not quite serious,
 As though it were his purpose so to make them,
 That for tales of romance we might take them,
 Or for Scripture, and as tastes might incline,
 Deem them humorous, fiendish or divine,
 As St. Andrew's Gospel, or predictions
 Like ancient Daniel's, or pleasing fictions
 Of droll imagery and contradictions.

Whether spirits whose eccentric motions,
 To cabinet-ware impart strange notions,
 Are counterfeit or real, is a question
 Too tough for our poetical digestion.
 Mortals are now to spirit brides united,
 Their courting's done and their vows are plighted,
 Through table-tippers acting as a proxy,
 Which looks suspicious and a little Fox-y !

Professor Hare, a man of sense and talents,
 Having weighed their ghost-ships in a balance,
 Finds that though they're much abused and slander'd,
 They still come up to the ghostly standard ;
 And that genuine spirits, like good gold
 Or sterling coin, by Troy-weight may be told,
 And then by authority made current,
 Are privileged thenceforth to be ghosts-errant.
 For this discovery the world must give credit,
 To the chemist Hare—let none forget it.

If spiritism's gassy, as we find it,
 Its opposers are not far behind it,

For preachers and editors are the ferrets,
Which hunt those cunning vermin, called spirits ;
Conduct the chase with so much falsifying,
Turning, dodging, doubling, and white-lying,
That when ghosts as humbugs we've classified,
Or set them down as subjects gassified,
We find the ghost-hunters have, as a mass,
More humbug than the hunted, and more gas ;
And hence their stormy opposition fails,
While their shadowy enemy prevails ;
Its hosts grow numerous as autumnal gnats,
In spite of typos and of white cravats ;
Though printers swear 'tis but a juggling bait,
They can't put down the heresies they hate.
It seems that jugglery worsts the journals,
And the saints are beat by the infernals ;
Yet the thing which Tray and Towser bark at,
This spiritism finds a better market
Than the *New York Herald's* moral teachings,
Or H. Ward Beecher's sublimest preachings ;
Hence 'tis a subject of strong suspicion,
That it is advanced by opposition,

And thrives upon fulminating powder,
 As the Yankees do on beans and chowder.
 The opposition of a gassy press
 And noisy pulpits, but insure success,
 For with the public 'tis well understood,
 That printers growl at whatsoe'er is good,
 And often do the Reverends endeavor
 To keep poor mortals in the dark forever.
 Orators and editors all light condemn,
 Excepting that which emanates from them,
 And that, as hinted once or twice before,
 Is flickering gas-light and nothing more.

Another theme should not forgotten be,
 That festering sore—accursed Polygamy.
 The Prophet Brigham,* now three-score and ten,
 Surrounded is by wives of other men,
 In number twenty-eight, sure and certain,
 Besides many more with whom he's flirtin'—

* Since the above was written, the Prophet Brigham has been taken from his twenty-eight wives, and now sleeps with his *for-*fathers.

Eliza, Anna, Sue, and Roxey Snow,
 Jane, Ellen, Kate, and Mary Bigelow,
 Amelia, Sarah Ann, Augusta Cobb,
 Hannah, Zina, Salvina Patience Robb;
 Harriet Cook, at forty, fat and fair,
 To amuse herself oft pulls old Brigham's hair;
 And Eliza, stately, blonde and bony,
 Best known of late for seeking alimony;
 So you see, old Brigham, too much married,
 In single blessedness had better tarried.
 The execution late of old John Lee,
 Head-devil of the Mountain Meadows Massacre,
 Has knocked polygamy's props from under,
 And the Mormon fraud has rent asunder.

To uses many gas has been applied,
 And some of them noble, it is not denied.
 Oh, how the world its virtues would adore,
 Could it but have one application more!
 If starving millions clamoring for bread,
 But on this airy substance could be fed,
 Modern benevolence would not deny
 Each hungry soul a bountiful supply;

For in empty, costless benefaction,
 This generous age is ever prompt to action,
 And want and woe not vainly would appeal,
 If gas their pangs could soothe and sorrows heal.

Man in disposition is so currish,
 That his mortal body he'll not nourish,
 On promises aeriform or vapory flourish.
 What comfort now can reach the suffering class,
 Since e'en Philanthropy has turned to gas?
 Mocking the wretch who asks for bread alone,
 With something less substantial than a stone,
 With good advice or some high sounding scheme,
 As impractical as a madman's dream ;
 Some plan our social errors to amend,
 And make all classes happy in the end ;
 But earth may forty times be burned or drowned,
 Before that blissful ending will be found.

Charity, absorbed in its grand pursuits
 In search of human woe in seven-league boots,
 Steps over starving seamstresses next door,
 And omits whole streets of neighboring poor,

Bearing costly gifts to some distant spot,
 To waste on those who really need them not ;
 To Indian belles, who court the solar blaze,
 A load of parasols, perhaps, conveys ;
 To the dusky natives of Afric's Cape,
 Who from all cleanly ways seek to escape,
 Soap and crash-towels send ; to Egypt's sons
 Who ne'er saw rain, umbrellas by the tons ;
 Bibles and hymn-books to Timbuctoo takes,
 Whose people deem them charms for curing aches
 Of head or back—as talismans indeed,
 Fit for any use, other than to read ;
 That art they never learned, but not the less
 They welcome all productions of the press ;
 Prayer-books, novels, any printed matter,
 Makes them luckier, handsomer and fatter ;
 Hence every tawny savage takes a leaf,
 And finds himself secure from every grief ;
 From devilish influence, just as much, in fact,
 Protected by a song-book as a tract.

Is it charity then to undeceive them,
 And their illusions pleasing bid to leave them ?

Is it benevolence to make them quake
 With dread forebodings of the burning lake?
 To send missionaries to convert them,
 Knowing not how much the change might hurt them,
 Nor how much better they would really be then,
 When changed to poor Christians from good heathen?
 Taught to worship dollars and not Dagon,
 To be sharpers, ceasing to be pagans;
 To have those blessings of the undeluded—
 Grog-shops and gallows in the lot included!

Among the boasted triumphs of this age,
 Forget we not the "Association" rage.
 Every enterprise and reformation,
 Is put through by potent combination;
 Nothing is done without Societies,
 Which we have in countless varieties,
 For good or evil formed; some are sensible,
 And some well nigh incomprehensible.
 There's a society of sober sailors!
 Another of conscientious tailors!
 Another still—and this a strange fact is—
 Of lawyers, not subject to sharp practice.

Yea, one of old-school doctors, who confess,
 That drugging may be carried to excess ;
 That bleeding folks quite freely from the arm,
 Or from the pocket, will most like do harm.
 There's a society of reverend pastors,
 Who mould their conduct by their Master's.
 No ! I'm mistaken ; this society,
 Censured by the bishops for impiety,
 And for its too presumptuous imitation,
 Was voted down by general acclamation !
 There's a union, I say it with pleasure,
 Of dry-goods men pledged to give good measure,
 And if 'twere not too puzzling to be stated,
 I'd tell you where their stores are situated.

Another class to you I now will name,
 Whose deeds are not unknown to gassy fame ;
 Those *monopolists* who with pious gush,
 Are ever seeking honest trade to crush ;
 And by the " grace of God " to succeed they hope,
 Themselves they'll hang if given plenty rope.
 Chock full of cant and of oily gammon,
 They strive both their God to serve and Mammon !

Those vile, unscrupulous, Money-makers,
 As full of tricks as are the Hindu Fakirs,
 Their stores they stock with satins and brocade,
 With hats and caps, and shoes, in prison made,
 Underwear decked and furbelowed with frills,
 Plasters porous, hose and female pills ;
 Each written down to cost, to all one price—
 A cunning trickster's dodge, an arch device,
 Green and simple ones the better to decoy,
 And honest fellow-tradesmen to destroy.
 Their rooms of waiting, like to bowers of fairy,
 Are fitted up to catch the soft, unwary ;
 "My parlor see," the wily spider said,
 The fly he "smelt a mice" and shook his head.
 My friends, the difference you can plainly see,
 'Twixt honest worth and vile humbuggery !

'Tis mentioned—a fact quite gratifying—
 That a society opposed to lying,
 Has been started by the editorial corps,
 Which has some fifteen members, if not more ;
 Men for well-tried rectitude, respected,
 From sixty thousand of the craft selected,

Some hailing from the South, some from the West,
 A few Down Easters too among the rest ;
 Yea, *one* in Philadelphia has his dwelling,
 And all are pledged to strict truth-telling ;
 But to repay them for their extra trouble,
 Their charge for every notice will be double.
 There's a company to improve ice-cream,
 Another still, for hatching eggs by steam ,
 One to cause the increase of Shanghai chickens,
 And one with mosquitoes to play the dickens.
 And there's a Bachelors' Association,
 Which seeks to banish wedlock from the nation ;
 Whose members on woman not depending,
 Their own washing, ironing do and mending.
 There's a coterie of ladies single,
 Who in the marriage state refuse to mingle ;
 And every one who this course renounces,
 Must her lace-work forfeit and her flounces.
 One rule of this maiden band I'll mention,
 Worthy of particular attention :
 Those only are admitted to be members,
 Who've seen seventy-five or more Decembers ;

They meet on nights of Tuesday to disparage
 The institution they detest—that's marriage ;
 And constant breathe their iterated vows,
 Never a wedded partner to espouse ;
 Resolved their maiden garlands still to wear,
 Though hosts of lovers wail in sad despair.

'Twould be a task of tiresome detention,
 One half of the societies to mention ;
 Let it suffice our notions to express,
 That all of them are gassy, more or less ;
 For men more gassy are associated,
 Than individuals when isolated ;
 As crows and geese are noisy in a flock,
 While one alone is silent as a block.
 What's accomplished by these vaporing gangs,
 Save making resolutions and harangues ?
 How many works stupendous are begun ?
 How much is doing and how little done ?
 How many wrongs are rectified—on paper ?
 What grand designs oft terminate in vapor ?
 Reform Combinations promise wonders,
 But nothing do and nothing make—save blunders !

Thousands of years the world has wagged along,
 The weak oppressed and mastered by the strong,
 The poor subjected to the wealthy classes,
 While power unchecked rode rough-shod o'er the masses,
 'Till 'twas discovered in some happy hour,
 That combination is a check to power ;
 That poor men joined in a fraternal band,
 May all the tyranny of wealth withstand.
 Reformers took the hint and thence forever,
 Cursed every separate endeavor ;
 Association was the only plan,
 For righting wrongs and elevating man.
 Thus was the thing abused and overdone,
 The principle to excess and riot run ;
 The ills they sought to cure were made double,
 And in countless ways they gave us trouble,
 'Till of their multiplied offences sick,
 We would the whole to oblivion kick,
 Or to Satan have them relegated,
 Whence the combination dodge first emanated.

Old John Milton says in his narration,
 The very first Reform Association

The devil started, with his brimstone brothers,
 Apollyon, Mammon, Moloch and some others,
 Hoping to stir up an awful bobbery,
 And high heaven make the realm of snobbery ;
 But this society—a serious joke—
 Proved gassy, and went off in fire and smoke ;
 So, many a like conclave has bursted,
 Sinking to realms infernal as the first did ;
 Thus every gassy enterprise must end,
 Though it awhile may flourish and ascend ;
 Howe'er it may shine, its sure conclusion
 Is downfall, darkness, ruin and confusion.
 Though fools and rascals may in squads unite,
 To eclipse or to extinguish light,
 There is no composition in the tether,
 Which binds these gassy impotents together ;
 As their number or their weight increases,
 By gravitation's force they fall to pieces,
 And without obstacle or opposition,
 They sink, like Satan, down to dark perdition.

Thus in spite of all the ways intended
 To mend earth's affairs, they are not mended ;

For since the combination scheme began,
Where are the mighty benefits to man ?
People are just as wretched, sickly, poor,
Weak, vile and foolish, as they were before ;
A thousand times more humbugged and distressed,
Since leagues have sought to have their wrongs redressed.
Doctors' associations have not lengthened
Our lives, nor our constitutions strengthened ;
With all the tract movements endeavor,
Sinners are as numerous quite as ever.
Bible societies their books may disburse,
But saucy infidelity still grows worse ;
And those combinations which fret and storm,
For legal and political reform,
No better service to the public do,
Than turning out old rogues to put in new.
E'en thus our reformatiions all will tend,
And our plans for amendments e'er must end,
When manly principle directs them not,
But gassy zeal intemperately hot.
Oh, whither shall their vapoing fury tend ?
What shall its progress be and what its end ?

To what extremes shall this gassifying run?
 What be the final upshot when 'tis done?

Some speculators of the reverend class,
 Have thought the atmosphere of heaven is gas;
 A gas of that exhilarating kind,
 Which fills with thrilling ecstasy the mind,
 Intoxicates the soul with bliss supreme,
 And turns existence to a joyous dream.
 May not the fluid which surrounds this globe,
 Earth's thin, translucent, atmospheric robe,
 Approach e'en now that beatific state,
 As time advances the millennial date?
 May not poor earth, her tribulations past,
 Become a gassy paradise at last?
 Her children's hearts be gladdened, as each brain
 Becomes more wildly, joyously insane?
 Then Congressmen, and editors, and all,
 Being quite released from sense and reason's thrall
 In a gassy circumambience pent,
 Shall know and feel their own true element.
 All men then unfettered in their folly,
 Shall more flighty grow and so more jolly,

Spending their time in the maze of dances,
 Or reading gassy rhymes and romances,
 With other occupations which dispense
 With that needful article, common sense.
 Then shall the moon with envy grow more pale,
 To see terrestrial lunacy prevail ;
 Then shall our globe the exhilaration feel,
 And in its orbit vacillate and reel ;
 The bright-eyed stars with many a knowing wink,
 Shall swear old mother earth has ta'en to drink ;
 But beholders who may truly scan it,
 Will our orbit name the gassy planet ;
 A pleasant *sobriquet* that it shall wear,
 While on its side it turns and floats in air.

No anxious fears of returning chaos,
 Or night's continued reign, need dismay us ;
 By gas acidulous, or gas corrosive,
 Stupifying gas, or gas explosive,
 Must a gassy world like ours be ended,
 A pantomimic close unique and splendid.
 To bring about this great and brilliant end,
 Ye gas producers all your efforts lend ;

Warriors, naval heroes, politicians,
Preachers, lawyers, financiers, physicians,
Ye actors, fiddlers, bards, romancers,
Opera-singers, circus-riders, dancers,
House and Life Insurance speculators,
Who gulp greenhorns down like alligators;
Ye bank-exploders, constitution-menders,
Gallows-haters, woman's-rights defenders,
Moral reformers, social ditto levellers,
Excitement-mongers, general be-devilers;
Fellow-citizens of every class,
All who manufacture or who deal in gas,
Proceed to accumulate the gassy store,
'Till reeling earth herself can stand no more,
But like a bubble blown to full distention,
Bursts in the zenith of her proud ascension,
And concludes her strange eventful story,
Ending in a blaze of gassy glory !

PHILADELPHIA, 1877.



ABROAD.



THE AUTHOR AT HOME.









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